

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review

BULGARIA'S JEWS

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HEINRICH GRAETZ—HISTORIAN OF THE JEWS

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DECEMBER

1941

VOLUNTEER DEFENSE WORK

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FOR FREEDOM OF MAN

"When thou goest forth to battle thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, thou shalt not be afraid of them; for the Lord thy God is with thee!" — Deuteronomy xx.i.

THESE words from the pages of the Bible must become the guiding principle of every American in these days of our national crisis. America has been forced into a war in defense of her very life as well as in defense of all those priceless ideals that alone make life worth while. Heaven knows America wanted peace and strove for peace. But our enemies willed otherwise. They have been preparing for war for many years, concentrating all their energies, all their national wealth for this very conflict. That was an advantage they possessed over us, and many, beholding the might of their arms, may lose heart. But the battle is not always to the strong.

"When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies and seest

horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, thou shalt not be afraid of them; for the Lord thy God is with thee."

We feel in the depths of our hearts that we are with God, and therefore God is with us in this battle. We are fighting for no territorial aggrandizement, no material gain. Like the Maccabees of the Chanukah tale, we are fighting for the freedom of man, for the freedom of nations as well as individuals, for the rights of the small and the weak to freedom, for the light of truth and justice and brotherhood to illumine the darkest corners of this earth.

We shall be strong and of good courage. No sacrifice that we shall be called upon to make will be too great or too heavy. The road will not be easy, we know; but we also know that the road will ultimately lead to victory, victory for those sacred ideals that come from God Himself.

"Thou shalt not be afraid of them; for the Lord thy God is with thee!"

—Dr. Israel H. Levinthal

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

IT is apparent that today the average American has a marked change of attitude toward the Bill of Rights, the 150th anniversary of which we are celebrating this week. The new attitude is in sharp contrast with the easy-going indifferent, lackadaisical reception accorded the Bill of Rights formerly.

Previously, to the man in the street, the Bill was an abstraction, a matter of unapproachable loftiness. Its commemoration carried only a distant, figurative meaning. The honor of celebration was reserved to those who dwelt in somewhat higher and remote places — the poet, the preacher, the editor.

Today, to every American, this Bill has a peculiarly close and here-and-now significance. Each one of us shares in the joy of its existence and expresses deep thankfulness for the blessings it has brought us. We feel truly a filial relationship to the founding fathers who gave it birth. We have a close identity with their struggles and aspirations to bring forth to the world this momentous document. This Bill is at present more than ever before a symbol of humanity, a connotation of America's morality, and a strict reminder that it is our high ethical obligation to fulfill it faithfully. We are keenly aware of its nearness and its immediate meaning in our

every-day life. We are conscious that it has everything to do with the bread we eat, the clothes we wear, the apartments we live in, the prayers we offer, the schools our children go to, the newspapers we read, the factories we work in.

What has wrought this remarkable change? A profound conviction that Europe is shaken, shattered, bleeding because it either had no Bill of Rights or dishonored such Bill as it may have had. A conviction that unless people live by a Bill of Rights, society breeds vile, violent, incompetent men. A conviction that the inevitable consequence to a people of faithlessness to the rights and obligations exemplified in the Bill of Rights is poverty, criminality, social degradation, moral depravity—a betrayal and falsification of the moral personality of the human being. This change indeed is cause for congratulation because it assures the development and preservation of our national and individual welfare.

Our Bill of Rights is ominously challenged today. It is at grips with overwhelming, barbarous forces. Our task is to preserve it, and preserve it in full. It cannot be preserved unless we sincerely live by it and for it.

Happily, Chanukah, the Feast of Lights, now falls at the same time that we commemorate the birth of the Bill of Rights. Our celebration of Chanukah reminds us that liberty and light go together. Liberty needs light — the light of knowledge. Knowledge in turn needs freedom — the freedom which the Bill of Rights vouchsafes.

—Louis J. Gribetz

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JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES—

"ביתנו לבן עצמנו"

An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

THE world has suddenly changed before us, and it is very difficult to speak to people on any subject other than that of the war which has so suddenly been forced upon us. I had intended to devote this column to a plea to my readers for the re-introduction into their homes at this season of Chanukah, of the Chanukah spirit; for the adornment of their homes with the Chanukah candelabra, and for the kindling of its lights on every eve of this festival.

When the war broke out, I felt that such a message would be out of place, that people's minds were centered only on one thought—the war and how to win it, and that every other theme must for the present be set aside or ignored.

On second thought, however, I realized that just because of the war, just because of the darkness into which we have been plunged, such a message, as I had in mind needs to be emphasized much more now than ever before.

Armies alone do not achieve victory. It is the spirit animating a people that can bring either victory or defeat. In the face of the mighty enemies warring on our beloved America, we need the strength of faith, the inspiration of the past, to give us the courage that will be needed to achieve the triumph of our cause.

Where can we find stronger faith than in the epic story of the war of the Maccabees which the Chanukah lights commemorate? The issue then was the same as the issue today—whether Might or Right shall rule the world, whether the strong have the right to enslave the weak, and whether every people—strong or weak, great or small—has the right to life and to freedom. Then, as now, a militaristic race that built up a mighty army and gigantic military force attempted a *blitz-krieg* on a people unprepared for war because it believed in peace. The odds were all in favor of physical might, but that might did not prevail, and the force of the human spirit emerged triumphant. It is that triumph that the Chanukah lights

commemorate, the triumph of light over darkness, of truth over falsehood, of ideals over brute force.

Can anyone over-estimate the need today of such inspiration? That is what we need, all of us, and especially our youth. Many young people are bewildered, and are losing heart. They must be re-enforced with new faith and courage. This message from the distant past would be to them a tonic of hope and strength. Why, then, deny them that tonic? Illumine your homes with the lights that symbolize the triumph of that very cause for which America is battling today. And do it beautifully, in a manner worthy of the message that it proclaims.

Many of you try to decorate your homes artistically. I have often seen the care with which you adorned your walls and placed on your floors all sorts of pleasing objects. But why not have the vision and the understanding to embellish your homes with a handsome Menorah that will not only add beauty to your surroundings but serve also as a constant reminder of that truth that we so sorely need today. There are magnificent Menorahs, products of the new, artistic spirit now renescent in Palestine, which were exhibited at the Palestine Pavilion of the World's Fair, and that are now on sale at the Palestine House in New York. Would not such a Menorah help to give us and to our children that spirit of valor, of courage, of confidence so essential for the ultimate victory of America's cause?

Israel H. Perutthal

PALESTINE AND AN ARAB UNION

By DR. JUDAH L. MAGNES

IF the Palestine problem remains solely the problem of Palestine it remains almost hopeless. The country is tiny, the passions it engenders are enormous. But if it can take its place within the framework of a larger Union, or Federation as it is loosely called, it assumes a more hopeful aspect. Within a Union or Federation of neighboring countries the Palestine problem is lifted on to another plane in at least two ways: First, the Arab fear of domination by the Jewish National Home is mitigated by reason of the political security which the wider and more powerful background of Arab Union affords, and second, the Jewish yearning for opportunities to settle refugees from persecution could be met more generously. Jewish-Arab cooperation would thus be helping to establish an equilibrium in Palestine, and helping to establish and strengthen the Arab Union. At difficult periods and in many lands, Jews and Arabs have achieved a high civilization together. They are the living descendants of that ancient Semitic world whose impact upon mankind's spirit has been so fateful. Why should they not work and be creative together again?

This is, of course, a simplification of a complex situation. The problems involved are of great intricacy. A Union or Federation presents political, economic, military, nationalistic, religious issues that require much study for their clarification, and statesmanship and large means to resolve them. A bi-national Palestine as an autonomous unit within a larger Union is the direction in which thinking should be done, and now that this larger framework is more than ready for discussion, there may be a chance of approaching the Palestine question, as one of its factors, with some degree of success. All three peoples (English, Arabs and Jews) fighting against a common enemy may now find it possible to devote themselves to planning constructively for a happier future.

The better way would be, of course, for Jewish leaders and Arab leaders to get together and make joint proposals to the Government. This would surely be welcomed by the Government, and one might reasonably expect that such joint proposals would be put into effect.

—From *Palestine Review*

IN the fall of 1937 I visited Bulgaria, the country of tobacco and rose-oil, of embroideries and folk-songs, that strange small kingdom, situated in the South-Eastern corner of Europe. "What do you think about my taking a refuge here?" I asked a prominent Zionist leader in Sofia, the very modern capital. I foresaw that my native Austria was doomed to fall. "Believe me," he said, "a year or two later you will be trapped here, too!"

A few weeks earlier the synagogue and the home of a Jewish resident in Varna, a Black Sea resort, were bombed by hooligans and the Minister of the Interior had ordered the arrest of 140 Fascist leaders. The Bulgarian governments were never anti-Semitic. They suppressed all anti-Semitic movements till 1935, when, obviously under foreign pressure, the Minister of the Interior, General Anthonasoff, decided to permit the Rodna-Saschitta (Home Guard) and the National Legion, anti-Semitic groups, to resume their activities. He forbade them, however, to preach intolerance. But General Soikonoff, leader of the Rodna-Saschitta, denied that his group was anti-Semitic, and declared it was only fighting speculators, Christian as well as Jewish.

The peaceful democratic Bulgarian people is perhaps the least anti-Semitic nation of the world. I have reason to know, for I met hundreds of Bulgarians of every class, when they visited my father, who was attached to the Bulgarian embassy in Vienna as a lawyer, from 1914 to 1938.

Jews have lived in Bulgaria since Roman times. In the Northern Bulgarian village of Gigen, the site of a small Roman fortress, the tombstone of an "Archisynagogue Josephus" of the second century, A.D. was found. From Talmudic responsa we know that a number of Byzantine Jews lived in Bulgaria in the early Middle Ages. In Serdica, the modern Sofia, they had their own synagogue, and the names of Pizanti and Romano, very common in Bulgaria, recall the memory of those early Jewish settlers.

A Jew is said to have spread much propaganda for his faith among the Bulgarians in those remote days. A converted Jew, Leo Mung, became an archbishop of the Bulgarian church in Ochrida, Western Macedonia, in the beginning of the 12th century. The Jewish influence grew when a beautiful Jewess became the wife of Tsar Ivan Alexander. She embraced Chris-

tianity, and as a Tsarina changed her name to Theodora. Her son, Ivan Schischmann, was the last Tsar of the independent medieval kingdom. In order to save his nation from destruction, he declared himself vassal of Sultan Murad I and gave him his sister Thamar (Mara) for wife. The sacrifice of the Tsar's sister made such an impression on the minds of the people that the memory of the half-Jewess Mara is still kept alive in Bulgarian folk-songs.

In 1360, however, at the synode of Tirnovo, both Christian heresies and the Jewish faith were condemned; three leaders of the Tirnovo Jewry were sentenced to death. One of them saved his life by turning Christian, the second was lynched by the mob on his way to the place of execution, and the third was executed, after his "slandorous tongue" and his ears — "which would not listen to the voice of the Lord"—had been cut off. Today's only Hebrew tombstones, at the bottom of the castle-hill in Tirnovo, recall the settlement of Jews in this ancient coronation-town.

A mass-immigration began at the end of the fifteenth century, when thousands of Jews fled from Spain to Turkey, and from there turned to Bulgaria. They spoke Ladino, and became the dominant element of the Jewish population. One of the new settlers was Joseph Karo, world-famous author of the "Schulchan Aruch." These Jews had a comparatively pleasant life under the tolerant Crescent, although they did not forget the Western countries where they came from.

"*Mi padre era di Francia, Mi madre d'Aragon*," as a Ladino song proudly runs.

Sabbatei Zewi, the Pseudo-Messiah, tried to obtain followers from the Bulgarian Jews. In 1666, when living as a prisoner of the Turks in the Dardanelles castle of Abydos, he invited them to celebrate his birthday on the ninth of Ab. Sofia then had about 2,000 Jews.

In the Russian-Turkish war of 1877 the Bulgarian Jews kept a strictly neu-

Anti-Semitism Was Forced on Bulgaria by Hitler's Agents

BULGARIA'S JEWS

By ALFRED WERNER

tral attitude since they were indebted to the benevolent Turkish government. When, however, the defeated Turkish army flooded back towards Sofia, the Jews formed volunteer companies to protect the capital from marauding Turkish gangs. Jews participated enthusiastically in the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885, and Prince Alexander von Battenberg, the regent, in an order of the day, addressed the Jewish soldiers as "genuine heirs of the old Maccabean spirit." 5000 Bulgarian Jews took part in the Balkan War and an even greater number in the World War.

Tsar Ferdinand also favored his Jewish subjects, some of whom held high official positions. The well-known Jewish artist, Boris Schatz, later founder of the Palestine "Bezalel" academy, was appointed Professor at the School of Arts and Crafts in Sofia. Ferdinand accepted from Schatz a little bronze statuette representing Matthias, the Hasmonean, crushing a Greek. This statuette was placed on His Majesty's desk. Newspapers related that each time he felt despondent he only had to look at this piece of sculpture to revive his courage.

The constitution of Bulgaria, founded in 1878, is a most liberal one. Like the American constitution it prohibits any racial or religious discrimination. In 1919, when representatives of the defeated kingdom appeared at the Peace Conference, Josue Caleb, vice-president of the Consistoire Central and president of the Zionist organization, assured the assembly that he was highly satisfied with the status of Bulgarian Jews. In the following years, however, when two Jews were elected to Parliament by Communist votes, anti-Semites tried to incite the people against their Jewish fellow-citizens by the malevolent coupling of Communism with Judaism. Some even went so far as to accuse the Jews of having taken part in the bombing of the great Sofia Cathedral (a Reich-

stag-fire-maneuver). But the Communist libel disappeared. King Boris—the present ruler—and all various governments favored the Jews so that, till the dawn of Nazidom, the situation of the 50,000 Jews (less than one per cent of the total population of the country) was fairly satisfactory.

Most Bulgarian Jews are fair-haired and speak Ladino, the Spanish idiom their ancestors brought with them from the Iberian peninsula. Those who are dark and speak Yiddish, are refugees from Russia and Roumania. A Gentile author, Jiracek, in his book on Bulgaria, calls Bulgarian Jews "modest, temperate, industrious." Only a small percentage are store-keepers, money-lenders, peddlers, most of them being craftsmen, particularly tinsmiths and glaziers. Some are even porters ("hamals"). In the Turkish period the Jews furnished the fire-brigade!

Important are the statements of Stoyan Omarchevsky, former Bulgarian Minister of Education, on the spiritual life of the Jews. The largest literacy in Bulgaria he found among the male population of the Jews and the female population of the Armenians. "The Jewish population in Bulgaria shows the greatest interest in education. Children of Jewish origin attend all primary and secondary schools and also the higher institutes of learning, including the National University. The Jews living in Bulgaria are good citizens of the country. During the wars, the greatest majority of the Jews fought for the noble cause of their native or adopted country. They are one of the most peaceful citizen groups, enjoy all the civil and political rights, take an active share in the political life of the state and join various political parties. They participate in the highest institutions of education, including the Supreme Educational Council. They enjoy the general franchise privileges, vote and are elected as members of the House of Commons, and may also, like all Bulgarian subjects, take any position in the various departments of administration."

It is remarkable that some of the first followers of Dr. Theodor Herzl were Bulgarian Jews. As early as 1894, Bulgarians, influenced by Dr. Leo Pinsker's ardent appeal, founded Zionist organizations at Widdin (where I admired a very beautiful synagogue), Tatar Pasardjik and Philippopol. One of the first leaders of

the Bulgarian Chowewe Zion was Marku Baruch, the "romanticist of Zionism." In 1896 the settlement, "Artuf," was founded in Palestine by Bulgarian Jews. For a long time this was the only Sephardic agricultural colony of the Yishuv.

Will Bulgarian Jews become a prey to the Axis powers? Has anti-Semitism increased since I visited the country? Here are a few facts: In January, 1938, German firms in Bulgaria were complying with a demand of the Nazi government to dismiss all Jewish employees. The manufacturers of the Bosch and Mercedes motor cars discharged all Jewish agents in Sofia, replacing them with "Aryans." Several times in that year the windows of synagogues were smashed by rioters, but the government arrested the hoodlums, padlocked the headquarters of the Fascist organizations and confiscated their archives. In January 1939 anti-Semitic handbills calling for "Death to all Jews" were distributed in Sofia—they were printed in Germany. In February, 1939, the Minister of the Interior declared that the Jews in Bulgaria were enjoying and would continue to enjoy the same rights as other Bulgarian citizens. In August, 1939, the Minister of Public Instruction issued a decree requiring teachers and instructors to take severe measures against instigators of anti-Semitic activities.

On the other hand, German, Austrian and Czech refugees were refused even a temporary refuge in Bulgaria, and those who succeeded in entering the country were threatened with immediate expulsion. And recently, in order to please the Germans, waiting to jump into the Balkans, the Bulgarian cabinet adopted a law barring Jews from governmental, municipal and army service, and limiting their membership in the professions. This conciliatory gesture, however did not stop the German pressure. The country fell prey to Nazi imperialism, and those Bulgarians who were ready to sacrifice their Jewish compatriots, have now become Hitler-slaves too.

When German armies occupied the country, on March 1, 1941, the fate of Bulgarian Jewry was sealed. Under Nazi pressure they were reduced to the status of slaves. They were forced into labor camps, ritual slaughter was banned, their economic life was virtually destroyed. But the Jews

are not the only victims of Nazism there. The overwhelming majority of the freedom-loving democratic Bulgarian nation is being oppressed by Bulgarian Quislings and the Gestapo. Defending themselves against their foes, the liberal Bulgarians regard their Jewish compatriots their brethren and allies in the battle for national independence.

The Conversion of An Anti-Semite

AN account of the conversion of an American anti-Semite is related by N. B. Linder in *The Day*, September 21st.

The name of the convert is Richard T. Dick, a follower of Coughlin and a member of the rabid anti-Semitic organization, "The Christian Mobilizers." Dick is a sick man, partly paralyzed, and was unable to carry on his propaganda in the usual manner. He therefore served as investigator and spy, posing as friend of the Jews and thus hoping to expose their alleged plottings and international conspiracies against the Christian world.

Because of his illness, Dick was forced to spend his summer in a Maine resort, where some Jews spent their vacations. He was told that on a nearby farm, there was a Jewish artist (whom Linder designates as "Ben"). Dick made it a point to become acquainted with the artist, who was an ardent Jewish nationalist, and prevailed upon him to read to him in English translation articles from the Yiddish press and also novels and essays from the vast store of the Yiddish literature.

Daily, the two met as friends to discuss Jewish problems, and the words of the artist had such an effect on Dick that his sense of fairness and justice was aroused, and he confessed to Ben the true motive for his interest in Judaism. The two became sincere friends, and Dick's hatred for Jews changed to understanding and respect, as his subsequent correspondence with Ben demonstrated.

* * *

Danish Nazis have embarked on a campaign of destruction and defacement of monuments and statues erected in honor of prominent Danish Jews. A Nazi-controlled paper in Denmark urges that the government remove from public places all sculptures or other monuments which honor Jews.

THE DREIDEL

By SHOLOM ALEICHEM

Translated by Hannah Berman

The following is the second half of Sholom Aleichem's famous Chanukah story—all the space that the Review can give to it. The form of the narrative is such, however, that the reader will not be hampered in his enjoyment of it by this abbreviation. "The Dreidel," or "The Spinning Top," as the translator calls it, is one of a series of stories by Sholom Aleichem adapted by Hannah Berman and published as a book by Alfred Knopf under the title "Jewish Children." The Review is grateful to the publisher for permission to reprint the story.

THE game Chanuka, spinning-tops, that have four corners, each marked with a letter of the alphabet, and are like dice, is very exciting. One can lose one's soul playing it. It is not so much the loss of the money as the annoyance of losing. Why should the other win? Why should the top fall on the letter G for him, and on the N for you? I suppose you know what the four letters stand for? N means no use. H means half. B means bad. And G means good. The top is a sort of lottery. Whoever is fortunate wins. Take, for example, Benny "Polkovoi." No matter how often he spins the top, it always falls on the letter G.

The boys said it was strange how Benny won. They kept putting down their money. He took on their bets. What did he care? He was a rich boy.

"G again. It's funny," they cried, and again staked their money. Benny whirled the top. It spun round and round, and wobbled from side to side, like a drunkard, and fell down.

"G," said Benny.

"G, G. Again G. It's extraordinary," said the boys, scratching their heads and again opening their purses.

The game grew more exciting. The players grew hot, staked their money, crushed one another, and dug one another in the ribs to get nearer the table, and called each other peculiar names — "Black Tom-cat! Creased Cap! Split Coat!" and the like. They did not see the teacher standing behind them, in his woollen cap and coat, and carrying his Tallis and Tephilin under his arm. He was going to the synagogue to say his prayers, and seeing the crowd of excited boys,

he drew near to watch the play. This day he does not interfere. It is "Chanukah." We are free for eight days on end, and may play as much as we like. But we must not fight, nor pull one another by the nose. The teacher's wife took her sickly child in her arms, and stood at her husband's shoulder, watching the boys risk their money, and how Benny took on all the bets. Benny was excited, burning, aflame, ablaze. He twirled the top. It spun round and round wobbled and fell down.

"G!"

Benny showed us his smartness until our pockets were empty. He thrust his hands in his pockets, as if challenging us — "Well, who wants more?"

We all went home. We carried away with us the heartache and the shame of our losses. When we got home, we had to tell lies to account for the loss of the money we had been given in honor of Chanukah. One boy confessed he had spent his on locust-beans. Another said the money had been stolen out of his pocket the previous night. A third came home crying. He said he had bought himself a pocket-knife. Well, why was he crying? He had lost the knife on his way home.

I told my mother a fine story—an "Arabian Nights" tale, and got out of her a second Chanukah present of ten groschen. I ran off with them to Benny, played for five minutes, lost the money and flew back home, and told my mother another tale. In a word, brains were at work and heads were busy inventing lies. Lies flew about like chaff in the wind. And all our Chanukah money went into Benny's pockets, and was lost to us for ever.

One of the boys became so absorbed in the play that he was not satisfied to lose only his Chanukah money, but went on gambling through the whole eight days of the festival.

And that boy was no other than myself, "the widow's son."

* * *

You must not ask where the wid-

ow's boy got the money to play with. The great gamblers of the world who have lost and won fortunes, estates, and inheritances—they will know and understand. Woe is me! May the hour never be known on which the evil spirit of gambling takes hold of one! There is nothing too hard for him. He breaks into houses, gets through iron walls, and does the most terrible thing imaginable. It's a name to conjure with—the spirit of gambling.

First of all, I began to make money by selling everything I possessed, one thing after another, my pocket-knife, my purse, and all my buttons. I had a box that opened and closed, and some wheels of an old clock—good brass wheels that shone like the sun when they were polished. I sold them all at any price, flew off, and lost all my money to Benny. I always left him with a heart full of wounds and the bitterest annoyance, and greatly excited. I was not angry with Benny. God forbid! What had I against him? How was he to blame if he always won at play? If the top fell on the G for me, he said, I should win. If it falls on the G for him, then he wins. And he is quite right. No, I am only sorry for myself, for having run through so much money—my mother's hard-earned groschen and for having lost all my things. I was left almost naked. I even sold my little prayer-book. O that prayer-book, that prayer-book! When I think of it, my heart aches, and my face burns with shame. It was an ornament, not a book. My mother bought it of Pethahicah the pedlar, on the anniversary of my father's death. And it was a book of books—a good one, a real one, thick, and full of everything. It had every prayer one could mention, the "Song of Songs," the Ethics of the Fathers, and the Psalms, and the Haggadah, and all the prayers for the whole year. Then the print and the binding, and the gold lettering. It was full of everything, I tell you. Each time Pethachiah the pedlar came round with his cut moustache that made his careworn face appear as if it was smiling—each time he came round and opened his pack outside the syna-

gogue door, I could not take my eyes off that prayer-book.

"What would you say, little boy?" asked Pethachiah, as if he did not know that I had my eyes on the prayer-book, and had had it in my hands seventeen times, each time asking the price of it.

"Nothing," I replied. "Just so!" And I left him, so as not to be tempted.

"Ah, mother, you should see the fine thing Pethachiah the pedlar has."

"What sort of a thing?" asked my mother.

"A little prayer-book. If I had such a prayer-book, I would—I don't know myself what I would do."

"Haven't you got a prayer-book? And where is your father's prayer-book?"

"You can't compare them. This is an ornament, and my book is only a book."

"An ornament?" repeated my mother. "Are there then more prayers in an ornamental book, or do the prayers sound better?"

Well, how can you explain an ornament to your mother—a really fine book with red covers, and blue edges, and a green back?

"Come," said my mother to me, one evening, taking me by the hand. "Come with me to the synagogue. Tomorrow is the anniversary of your father's death. We will bring candles to be lit for him, and at the same time we will see what sort of a prayer-book it is that Pethachiah has."

I knew beforehand that on the anniversary of the death of my father, I could get from my mother anything I asked for, even to the little plate from heaven, as the saying is. And my heart beat with joy.

When we got to the synagogue, we found Pethachiah with his little pack still unopened. You must know Pethachiah was a man who never hurried. He knew very well he was the only man at the fair. His customers would never leave him. Before he opened his pack and spread out his goods, it took a year. I trembled, I shook. I could hardly stand on my feet. And he did not care. It was as if we were not talking to him at all.

"Let me see what sort of prayer-book it is you have," said my mother.

Pethachiah had plenty of time. The river was not on fire. Slowly, without haste, he opened his pack, and spread out his wares—big Bibles, little prayer-books for men, and for women, big

Psalms books and little, and books for all possible occasions, without an end. Then there were books of tales from the *Talmud*, tales of the *Balshem-tov*, books of sermons, and books of devotion. I imagined he would never run short. He was a well, a fountain. At last he came to the little books, and handed out the one I wanted.

"Is this all?" asked my mother. "Such a little one."

"This little one is dearer than a big one," answered Pethachiah.

"And how much do you want for the little squirrel?—God forgive me for calling it by that name."

"You call a prayer-book a squirrel?" asked Pethachiah. He took the book slowly out of her hand; and my heart was torn.

"Well, say. How much is it?" asked my mother. But Pethachiah had plenty of time. He answered her in a sing-song:

"How much is the little prayer-book? It will cost you—it will cost you—I am afraid it is not for your purse."

My mother cursed her enemies, wished that they might have black, hideous dreams, and asked him to say how much.

Pethachiah stated the price. My mother did not answer him. She turned towards the door, took my hand, and said to me:

"Come, let us go. We have nothing to do here. Don't you know that *Reb* Pethachiah is a man who charges famine prices?"

I followed my mother to the door. And though my heart was heavy, I still hoped the Lord would pity us, and Pethachiah would call us back. But Pethachiah was not that sort of man. He knew we should turn back of our own accord. And so it was. My mother turned round and asked him to talk like a man. Pethachiah did not stir. He looked at the ceiling. And his pale face shone. We went off, and returned once again.

"A curious Jew, Pethachiah," said my mother to me afterwards. "May my enemies have the plague if I would have bought the prayer-book from him. It is a famine price. As I live, it is a sin. The money could have gone for your school-fees. But it's useless. For the sake of tomorrow, the anniversary of your father's death—peace be unto him!—I have bought you the prayer-book, as a favor. And now, my son, you must do me a fa-

vor in turn. Promise me that you will say your prayers faithfully every day."

Whether I really prayed as faithfully as I had promised, or not, I will not tell you. But I loved the little book as my life. You may understand that I slept with it, though, as you know, it is forbidden. The whole *Cheder* envied me the little book. I minded it as if it were the apple of my eye. And now, this *Chanukah*—woe unto me!—I carried it off with my own hands to Moshe the carpenter's boy, who had long had his eye on it. And I had to beg of him, for an hour on end, before he bought it. I almost gave it away for nothing—the little prayer-book. My heart faints and my face burns with shame. Sold! And to what end? For whose sake? For Benny's sake, that he might win off me another few "*kopek*s." But how is Benny to blame if he wins at play?

"That's what a spinning top is for," explained Benny, putting into his purse my last few *groschen*. "If things went with you as they are going with me, then you would be winning. But I am lucky, and I win."

And Benny's cheeks glowed. It is bright and warm in the house. A silver *Chanukah* lamp is burning the best oil. Everything is fine. From the kitchen comes a delicious odor of freshly melted goose-fat.

"We are having *latkes* tonight," Benny told me in the doorway. My heart was weak with hunger. I flew home in my torn sheep-skin. My mother had come in from her shop. Her hands were red and swollen with the cold. She was frozen through and through, and was warming herself at the stove. Seeing me, her face lit up with pleasure.

"From the synagogue?" she asked.

"From the synagogue," was my lying answer.

"Have you said the evening prayer?"

"I have said the evening prayer." was the second lie to her.

"Warm yourself, my son. You will say the blessing over the *Chanukah* lights. It is the last night of *Chanukah* tonight, thank God."

* * *

If a man had only troubles to bear, without a scrap of pleasure, he would never get over them, but would surely take his own life. I am referring to my mother, the widow, poor

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CHANUKAH CUSTOMS—A Century ago and Today

By BEN M. EDIDIN

From "Jewish Holidays and Festivals"

CHANUKAH is a festive week in the Jewish calendar yielding second place only to Purim among the minor festivals. It was primarily a home holiday. As time went on, new customs developed and special prayers and songs were composed. Let us pay an imaginary Chanukah visit to a Jewish European community of a hundred years ago or more.

We enter the synagogue, beautifully illuminated, thanks to the special society of young men who see that the synagogue is cheerfully lighted on every joyous occasion. The service itself is not different from the daily evening service, with the exception of the Chanukah light ceremony and the *Al Hanisim* prayer. Every heart beats a little faster when the prayer is chanted.

We thank Thee for the miracles, the redemption, the mighty deeds and saving acts, as well as for the wars which Thou waged for our fathers in the days of old, at this season. In the days of the Hasmoneans, Mattathias son of Johanan, the high priest and his five sons . . . Thou delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few . . . and the arrogant into the hands of those who occupied themselves with Thy Torah . . . Thy children came into Thy sacred house, cleansed Thy Temple, purified Thy sanctuary, kindled lights in Thy holy courts, and appointed these eight days of Chanukah to give thanks and praises to Thy great name.

Then let us spend the rest of the evening in a home. Father and sons are back from the synagogue. Mother has long finished her chores, since it is customary not to do any work after the Chanukiyah, or Chanukah lamp, is lighted. The lamp, made of copper and decorated with designs of lions, vines, pomegranates, eagles, and other favorite Jewish symbols, rests on the window sill. The family gathers around the Menorah while father pours in the oil. He recites the benedictions as he lights each wick, the family answering "Amen." Then all chant in chorus the hymns *Hanerot*

Halalu, and Maoz Tzur. It is the fifth night, but he kindles six lights, including, the Shamash*.

Now we join the family at the table for a delicious meal in which latkes are most important, and we hear the story of brave Judith, whose courage delivered her community from death. Father tells them the story, which is associated with Chanukah. Judith lived in Bethulia. The city was besieged by a large army commanded by Holofernes. When the food began to give out, the people lost all hope of saving their lives. Judith was a beautiful woman, and she decided to risk her own life in a bold attempt to rescue her people. Stealing out of the city, she somehow managed to obtain an interview with Holofernes. He was so charmed with her beauty that he suspected nothing. She entertained him, gave him cheese cakes to eat and plenty of wine. When he became drunk, she decapitated him, and brought the head back in a sack. Their commander dead, the enemy lost courage and fled before the Jews. Thus Judith delivered the city.

As the meal proceeds, other stories are recalled for the sake of the younger children, including the well-known tales of Hannah and her seven sons, the old man Eliezer, and the miraculous jug of oil. Father explains that this oil, which burned for eight days, is connected with the great miracle of the Jewish people, who have lived on and on for so many centuries in spite of continuous wandering and persecution, and are still alive today.

One of the boys who is in his first year at the Yeshivah tells them of other Chanukahs, or dedication festivals, he has recently studied: the Chanukah celebration when the Tent of Meeting was completed in the days of Moses; the dedication of Solomon's Temple; the celebration when the Second Temple was opened; and the festival when Nehemiah finished building the walls of Jerusalem.

Soon the meal is over. The children are approaching father and whispering something in father's ear. Smiling, he fetches his purse and hands each one several coins — Chanukah

Gelt. But it is not for themselves. Tomorrow they will bring the money as a Chanukah gift to their teacher. Father has ready a special present which he will deliver personally, a gift for the older daughter's future husband. Poor children receive Chanukah Gelt from the community chest.

The table having been cleared away, the family seat themselves for an evening of Chanukah games. Two are playing Katowes, a game of arithmetic riddles and puzzles. The answer to each one must be forty-four, which is the total number of lights on the eight days. The younger children are playing *trendel* or *dreidel*. This is a four-winged spinning top with the four Hebrew letters—Nun, Gimel, Hei, and Shin. They stand for Nes Gadol Hayah Sham, "A great miracle happened there." The older folks are playing cards. Chanukah was one time when cards were permitted.

The games are frequently interrupted by knocks on the door. Most of the callers are beggars who have come for their Chanukah gifts. Generally, begging from door to door was not allowed by Jewish communities in those days; but Chanukah was made an exception. Some of the visitors are relatives and friends who have come to spend the evening.

At one point a rather loud knock is heard, followed by an equally loud song. The door opens and a half dozen boys troop in singing, "Buy us a little bread!" No one is surprised. Chanukah is review time in the schools, and as a reward for hard work are not the pupils entitled to a feast? These boys are one of the several groups making the rounds from house to house to collect food and sweets for the banquet. Mother has been expecting the visit and she has a basket all packed for them.

Were we to choose Oriental Jewish communities for our imaginary visit, we should find other Chanukah customs. Among the Yemenites in Southern Arabia, for example, we should hear in the synagogue the reading of *Megillat Antiochus*, or *Scroll of Antiochus*. If we were lucky, we might get an invitation to a chil-

* The extra light, called Shamash, father explains, is because we are allowed only to see Chanukah lights, not to use them. But this is hardly possible when the lamp is so close to us. By having an extra light it is as though we are benefiting from this additional light only and not from the others.

children's Chanukah party. Each child brings his refreshments with him — roasted corn, carrots, grape juice, and the like. Seated around the lighted Chanukiyah, they eat, sing, and make merry. After the party, they form in line and march noisily through the streets, stopping to extend festival greetings at each house. Widows who have no grown sons invite them to come in. The youngsters need no second invitation. In they march, perform the light ceremony for the women, and burst out singing and dancing.

TODAY, most of the customs observed on Chanukah a hundred years ago are with us still. We light the Chanukiyah each of the eight days, beginning with one light on the first night and concluding with eight on the last. Dreidel games are universally popular, as are card games and, more rarely, the clever Katowes riddles. Children receive Chanukah Gelt, part of which they give to some worthy cause. Dairy dishes, including latkes, or pancakes, are eaten. In the synagogue, the Al Hanisim and the Hallel prayers are recited. Among Yemenite Jews and Sephardim, the Antiochus Megillah is read. In some communities, boys still collect food for school banquets.

However, while formerly Chanukah was primarily a home festival, today it has become also a community holiday, celebrated with plays, entertainments, concerts, and parties. Some institutions display large Menorahs in the lobby. Youth clubs hold Chanukah parties and present plays. Thousands of young men and women go out on Chanukah Sunday with Jewish National Fund boxes and flags to collect money for the purchase of land in Palestine.

In Palestine, Chanukah is truly a Festival of Lights. In every village and colony a large electric menorah, mounted on the water tower, illu-

mines the settlement each night. In Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and other cities, huge Chanukiyahs are lighted on synagogues, schools, and other public buildings. Window displays in stores and shops are decorated with holiday designs. Small Chanukiyahs twinkle from the window sill of every home.

Lighting the public Chanukiyah is a picturesque and impressive ceremony in the cooperative colonies. The whole settlement, from toddling two-year-olds to graybeards, gathers around the water tower after dark. Their heads raised, eyes directed to the Hanukiyah on the tower, the ceremony begins with an appropriate song by the children. From above rings out the clear voice of a child reciting the benediction. Amen! respond the people below. In a flash, the bright lights are on, and the crowd sings Maoz Tzur. Then a procession is formed, first the nursery and kindergarten children, next elementary school pupils, after them the older boys and girls, and behind them the adults. Several carry torches. Singing Chanukah melodies and new songs of bravery and freedom, they march to the schoolhouse to witness a program by the children and to enjoy refreshments.

Even more picturesque is the public ceremony in Tel Aviv. At sunset the high school students as well as older pupils from the elementary schools assemble in the public square or in front of a synagogue. Every boy and girl carries a candle, while many have torches ready. They arrange themselves in a huge semi-circle, facing a decorated platform reserved for the mayor and other prominent citizens. A large Chanukiyah stands on the platform. All around the children are thousands of spectators.

The ceremony begins at dusk. The cantor walks up to the Menorah and, chanting the benedictions, lights one candle after another. A loud chorus of "Amen" rings out from the thousands of pupils. The moment the cantor begins to kindle the Chanukiyah, the children begin to light their own candles and torches. After a minute or two, the square becomes a sea of twinkling lights. A band strikes up the Maoz Tzur, and the thousands of children and guests join in one mighty chorus. Then the mayor extends the city's greetings, and a teacher speaks briefly about the significance of the festival. Again the band plays and the huge audience sings.

At a given signal the twinkling lights and flaring torches begin to move—first one school, then a second, then a third, the band playing all the while. They are forming in line for the annual Chanukah parade. Up one street and down the next they march, the lighted candles in their hands. The little lights dance up and down as they are raised and lowered with every step. Ten thousand young voices sing lustily. All along the route the sidewalks are crowded with thousands of spectators.

A more adventurous Chanukah custom in Palestine is hiking to Modin, ancient home of the Hasmoneans, where the banner of revolt was raised by Mattathias and his five sons. There are caves and tombs where the Hasmoneans are said to have been buried. Young Jews from all parts of the country come to Modin on Chanukah to pay their respects to the heroic leaders who served their nation and religion so faithfully.

JUDAH MACCABEE By Jessie E. Sampter

Judah Maccabee
Give a sword to me
Now in youth!
By the candle's light
Kindle here tonight,
Do I vow to fight
For the truth.
Still the Greeks are here,
Still we yield in fear,
Cringe and cower.
Judah Maccabee
Make my people free
That their eyes may see
Israel's power!

FOR THESE SINS —

FOR the sins which we have sinned: By emptying our homes of our beautiful traditional ceremonials; By not setting a better personal example for our children in Jewish living; by not giving our children the thorough Jewish education which would protect them against the misinformation about Jews and Judaism emanating from unfriendly sources; By assuming that synagogue inspiration can be obtained by paying without praying; By our failure to support the literary products of our people; By encouraging wasteful and duplicating organizations; By talking about Judaism instead of living it. For all these, oh God of Forgiveness, forgive us."—*American Jewish World*.

LAMPS OF DEDICATION By Solomon Solis-Cohen

Shine, lamps of Dedication, shine,
Your hallowed radiance be the sign
That still there burns undimmed by years,
Not quenched but fed by blood and tears,
In Israel's heart, clear, steadfast,
bright,
The flame it caught from Sinai's height.

ON September 8th of this year the Jewish world memorialized the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the great scholar and historian, Heinrich Graetz, author of the notable "History of the Jews."

Born in 1817 in the village of Xions, in the German province of Posen, the son of a butcher of slender means, young Heinrich received his early education at Zerkov, a nearby and somewhat larger village to which his parents had removed. Heinrich was sent to *cheder* at an early age, as was the custom at that time. The province of Posen had been but recently acquired by the Kingdom of Prussia. That was in 1795, when the final dismemberment of Poland and its division among Prussia, Russia and Austria took place. In 1822, the Prussian government issued a decree requiring all Jewish communities there to establish facilities for secular education. The *cheder* was Heinrich's school. The boy seemed precocious and after his Bar Mitzvah his parents decided to send him to the larger town of Wollstein, where his mother's sisters and relatives lived.

In spite of the governmental decree, opposition to the introduction of secular studies in the Hebrew Schools continued for fear that this would endanger the progress of Hebrew studies. Opposition was particularly strong in the provincial towns, where the population was more Polish than German. One quarter of a century cannot normally change the nature of a people, especially people so steeped in the traditions of many centuries as the Jews were. The tempo of life was slow. It was long before the era of speed and rapid change. As yet the telegraph, telephone and even the daily newspaper were unknown in these primitive Polish hamlets and towns. Even in the larger cities, even in the principal city of Posen itself, the struggle between the Orthodox and the so-called enlightened factions was extremely bitter. Posen was one of the oldest of Polish cities. For a number of centuries it had been famous for its yeshivahs and its minor academies of Talmudic learning. Its Rabbis were among the greatest in the long history of Polish Jewry. At that time the celebrated Rabbi Akiba Eger, erudite and saintly, presided over the Rabbinate of Posen. Though not a zealot, as were his own son-in-law, the eminent Rabbi Moses Sofer and others, Rabbi Akiba Eger con-

ceded to the Prussian authorities only two hours daily for secular studies lest there be neglect of the study of the Torah. Of course, the more liberal elements clamored for more time devoted to general education, but they represented the minority and were outshouted.

It was in a situation of this sort that young Graetz found himself at Wollstein. Fortunately for him, the Rabbi of the town, more progressive than the average Polish Rabbi of that period, early recognized his abilities, and formed a respect and liking for him. For five years Graetz remained at Wollstein. Though he lived frugally often in penury and privation, Graetz was happy because of his opportunity to study. He read many of the German classics, mastered the French language and familiarized himself with many of its classics. When he reached nineteen his parents and relatives began to prod him to seek a career. He also began to feel the call of the outside world and to be bored by the provincial outlook of the town of Wollstein. He determined to settle in Prague, where there was then a fine yeshivah and a famous old University, and obtain a more systematic academic training. One of his reasons for desiring an academic education was that he felt that through the knowledge thus obtained he would be better able to champion the cause of Orthodox Judaism. He was at that time zealously orthodox. He obtained a passport to travel to Prague, but upon arriving at the frontier, the immigration officials refused him admittance into Austria. He then returned to his parents at Zerkov.

Reform Judaism was now under way in Germany. Under the leadership of the renowned preacher and scholar Abraham Geiger, it had made great strides. Geiger was at that time Rabbi at Breslau, where he had successfully engaged and defeated the Conservative leadership. His fame for

An Appraisal of the Work of the Great Scholar on the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Death

HEINRICH GRAETZ—Historian of the Jews

By DR. I. N. RABINOWITZ

scholarship and homiletical ability spread throughout the German domain. It was then that there came to Graetz' notice a new book by a young rabbi of Oldenburg, Samson Raphael Hirsch. This book, "The Thirteen Letters of Ben-Uzziel," made a profound impression on the sensitive youth. In this book, Hirsch defended the practices of Orthodox Judaism against the attacks of its detractors. S. R. Hirsch was somewhat of a saint and mystic. His outspoken zeal and sincerity rallied about him all the conservative elements. He became leader of the German Neo-Orthodoxy. This book led Graetz to write a letter to Hirsch, expressing his desire to join him at Oldenburg and to remain under his care. Delighted with the earnestness of the young man, Hirsch invited him to come and promised to provide him with a home and with his personal needs.

For the following years, Graetz lived at the home of Hirsch. He was pupil, companion and amanuensis. Some undisclosed coolness between patron and protege later arose, and in 1840 Graetz decided to leave Oldenburg and accepted a tutorship with a private family at Ostrova.

A precarious struggle was the lot of Heinrich Graetz now. Natural shyness and pride prevented him from seeking assistance. He suffered many a hungry day, many a sleepless, worrisome night.

In 1842 Graetz arrived at Breslau and registered as student at the University. His courses were on the whole disappointing to him but he continued sedulously to pursue his studies. In other respects he was satisfied with his sojourn at the Silesian capital. He found many opportunities to engage in other activities apart from his studies. Inspired by the principles acquired during his long sojourn with

his former friend and patron, S. R. Hirsch. Graetz took up the fight in defense of Orthodoxy. In an article in the "Orient," a magazine published by the famous lexicographer, Julius Furst, he severely criticized the Reform movement and, in particular, censured, Geiger's standpoint and his text-book of the "Mishnah." This article was followed by others of similar nature. His championship of Orthodoxy made him popular with the Conservative party. At a Rabbinical Conference held at Frankfurt, he embraced the cause of the noted R. Zeehariah Frankel, with whom he bolted the conference because of the majority stand on the question of the Hebrew language.

In 1845, Graetz received his Ph.D. at the University of Jena. His thesis, published a year later, was on the subject, "Gnosticismus und Judenthum" (Gnosticism and Judaism). The Conservative Party, in reward for his efforts, appointed him principal of a religious school founded by them. His friends and admirers also maneuvered to arrange for his appointment to a Rabbinical post. At that time there was a vacancy in the Rabbinate at Gleivetz, a city second in importance only to Breslau itself. Graetz at first was reluctant to consider this position. However, considerations both economic and spiritual induced him to look more favorably on the proposition. When, therefore, he received the invitation to preach a trial sermon on the Day of Atonement, he accepted the call. On the eve of Yom Kippur the great scholar ascended to the pulpit and stood before a large congregation to deliver his address. But what a fiasco it was! He had forgotten his memorandum, and after mumbling a few words, he forgot his speech completely and had to leave the synagogue. His friends made an effort to arrange another trial. Their efforts were unsuccessful. Graetz himself was convinced that he was not the type, to develop into a successful pulpit orator. His failure was, in reality, a boon to himself and to future generations. The ministry may have interfered with the brilliant work produced by him. The leisure and the opportunity for study that he needed would often have been limited by ministerial duties.

Meanwhile, the question of mere bread and butter troubled his mind during his waking hours and was as a specter during sleepless nights. In

despair, he left Breslau in 1848. His intention was to settle in Vienna and take up journalism. On his way, however, he stopped at Nikolsburg, where, occupying the position of Chief Rabbi of Moravia, was his old friend S. Hirsch. Hirsch was then contemplating the establishment of a Rabbinic academy and induced Graetz to remain with him until his plans became realities. Graetz again occupied Hirsch's home for a while and supported himself by tutoring. Soon Hirsch sent him away to become principal at the newly created school in the neighboring town of Lundenberg.

Graetz' life at Lundenberg was not a happy one. Many enemies arose on all sides. He was even accused by his opponents of revolutionary tendencies. In the meantime, Hirsch left Nikolsburg to assume new duties at Frankfurt. Graetz was left without the valuable support of his powerful friend, and feeling completely deserted, and in despair, he decided to resign.

We next find Graetz at Berlin where he delivered a course of lectures on Jewish History. His friendship with Frankel now bore fruit. Frankel was arranging to establish his famous Rabbinical Seminary at Breslau and intended to engage Graetz for the faculty.

In 1850 Graetz traveled to Krotoschin to marry the girl to whom he had been engaged a number of years, Marie Monach. Theirs was a very happy union, and the tide of fortune seemed to turn in his favor. His appointment as a member of the faculty of the newly organized Seminary was of the greatest benefit to him. There he had the chance to study and to create. There many honors were bestowed upon him. Even the Prussian government in 1860, invested him with the honorary title of Professor. There he wrote his "History of the Jews." He remained at his post at Breslau until his death in 1891.

Graetz began to take an interest in Palestine, and in 1872 visited the Holy Land to gather material for the first and second volumes of the History. While in Palestine, he became interested in the establishment of an Orphanage in Jerusalem. He was also interested in the "Alliance Israelite Universelle," and in 1872 attended a conference in Paris where the question of the Roumanian Jew was discussed.

Meanwhile, a storm was brewing in Germany. Herman von Treitschke,

historian, college professor and publicist, was one of the leaders of anti-Semitism. He cited Graetz' History as being antagonistic to Christianity and a menace to the Reich. Von Treitschke possessed a splendid oratorical power and a brilliant writing style and he created a stir both among Jews and Christians. Graetz replied to the accusations of Von Treitschke, and, in turn, Von Treitschke repeated his allegations. In the meantime, the Jewish community, and especially the super patriotic, somewhat assimilated Berlin intellectuals, were greatly disturbed. Conferences were held, a "Union of German Israelitish Congregations" was organized, a commission was formed for the purpose of studying the history of German Jewry. The plans were replete with promises and glowing expectations but the result was disappointing. In an undertaking of this nature, Graetz' participation should have been asked. But, on the contrary, he was completely ignored. In fact, the commission consisted mostly of non-Jewish members, and the few Jews appointed were ignorant even of the most elementary Jewish knowledge.

On October 31, 1887, Graetz celebrated his seventieth birthday. His friends, admirers and disciples made it the occasion to demonstrate their appreciation of his work as scholar and teacher. Congratulatory letters, and telegrams were received from all over the world. His greatest surprise, however, was the receipt of a diploma from the Spanish Academy, conferring upon him honorary membership. This recognition of his value as a scholar was particularly gratifying when we consider that in his History he meted out a rather harsh criticism of the Spaniards on account of their treatment of the Jews during the period of the Inquisition and expulsion.

The last days of Graetz' life were spent serenely. He continued his lectures at the Jewish Theological Seminary at Breslau and also quietly continued his scientific research. An indefatigable worker throughout his life, he persisted in his old habit of rising early and retiring late, and was at his desk almost constantly. As his later life was peaceful so was his death. He had gone to Carlsbad, the health resort, for the treatment of minor ailments, and on his return trip, contrary to the advice of his physi-

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THE POETRY OF FRUG

SAND AND STARS

*Translated from the Yiddish
by Philip M. Raskin*

THE silver moon shines, and the
diamond stars twinkle,
The night soars o'er land and
o'er man;
The Book of Creation before me is
open—

I read it—and read it again.

I read and repeat the old marvellous
stories—

A voice I hear answering me:
"My people shall be as the stars of
the heaven,
As sand on the shore of the sea!"

Oh, heavenly Father, not one of Thy
sayings

Has ever proved vain or untrue;
Thy will on the earth, as thy will in
the heaven

Must come, when its season is due.

And half of Thy promise has long
been accomplished:

Thy people became as the sand,
As gloomy and trampled, as humble
and wind-tossed,

As scattered on sea and on land.

Yea, half of Thy promise has long
been accomplished,

Thy people is trodden as sod;
But what of the beautiful, the lofty,
the shining,

The heavenly stars, O my God?

THE CUP

*Translated from the Russian
by Julius Lasker*

IS it true, my darling mother,
What dear grandpa used to say—
That a wonder-cup in Heaven
God has near him night and day?

That should sorrow strike His people,
Should misfortune lay them low;
In the cup a tear of pity
From the eyes of God will flow?

Till the cup, one day of mercy,
Will be filled with tears divine;
Then the sun of joy and glory
Will again above us shine?

And Messiah, whom we hoped for

Through the bitter years of pain,
Will arrive, and he will lead us
To the Holy Land again?

"True, my son,"—The child stood
thoughtful,
And his wistful eyes grew dim
"Is that the cup without a bottom
That it fills not to the brim?"

When, O when, please tell me,
mother,
Will that cup be filled with tears?
Do its sacred, precious contents
All dry up throughout the years?

Faith and Anguish, silent prayer,
Beamed and burned within his gaze.
And the mother's head was bowed,
Heart aflutter, eyes ablaze.

On her cheeks two tears were gleam-
ing,

Rolling downward like two pearls,
Then they lingered and descended
On her darling's raven curls.

These tears, O God, forevermore
In Thy cup of mercy store.

THE JEWISH CHILD

*Translated from the Yiddish
by Jacob Robbins*

BURIED deep in the darkness,
Far from the sun's warm light,

See you not the blind worm
In his night?

He was born in the darkness,
Fated there to creep,
Sleepless, in the kingdom
Of eternal deep.

Like a worm in the darkness,
Dumb and blind and frail,
You pass your childhood's wonder-
years,
Weak and pale.

Near your cradle your mother
Sings no song
Of a happy, quiet life-time,
Sweet and long.

Nor of fields and gardens
Where a boy
Plays and spends the daylight hours,
Wild with joy.

No, a fount of grief and sadness
Ever springs;
Bitter, bitter is the sorrow
That she sings.

Low, sad sighs, and hot, hot tear-
drops,
Low, sad sighs,
Grow forever in the forest
Where your pathway lies.

You were born in the darkness,
Fated there from birth
Ever to be creeping
In the earth.

SIMON SAMUEL FRUG

By DR. E. N. RABINOWITZ

DEATH came as a respite to the
miserable existence of the Rus-
sian and Yiddish poet, Simon
Sammuel Frug. Domestic troubles, the
loss of an only child, embittered the
outlook of this talented man. Conse-
quently, his poetry is gloomy, full of
complaints against his fate, even
against his creator. His popular poem,
"Sand and Stars" (reprinted above),
frequently heard in song or recita-
tion, has a satirical connotation. The
Almighty has kept his promise to Is-
rael to be trodden upon as the sand.
But, where is his promise to make Is-

rael as the shining star?

It is twenty-five years now since
Frug's death. We are called upon to
honor the memory of one who was a
pioneer in the field of Yiddish poetry.
First distinguished as a poet of ele-
gance and refinement in Russian,
Frug entered the field of Yiddish lit-
erature with an established reputation
at the age of twenty-eight.

Frug was born in the Ukraine in
1860. His grandfather was among the
earliest settlers in the Jewish agricul-
tural colonies there. Early in life, he

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THE NEWS OF THE MONTH

By LESTER LYONS

UNDER the auspices of the American Jewish Congress, the first Inter-American Jewish Conference in history recently met in Baltimore. The conference, which was attended by representatives of Jewish communities of almost all the countries on the North and South American continents, had been assembled for common deliberation and action in matters of common concern to them as Jews and as citizens of the Americas. It was decided at the Conference to form an Inter-American Jewish Council to meet for the purpose of common counsel and cooperation among the Jewish communities of the western hemisphere and in order to promote the "Good Neighbor" policy.

The Conference adopted resolutions urging the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish commonwealth, the restoration of equality rights for Jews, Jewish participation in the peace conference to follow the war, an immediate campaign for the relief and rehabilitation of victims of Nazism and war, civilian aid to Great Britain, and the universal establishment of the Bill of Rights. In the keynote address of the Conference Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles pledged that after the war this government would join with other governments in finding places of resettlement for the millions of oppressed made homeless by Hitlerism, including the Jews. He urged various governments, particularly those represented on the Inter-Governmental Committee for Refugees, to begin now to study scientifically the geographic and economic problem of resettling refugees in new areas.

Dr. Stephen S. Wise, President of the American Jewish Congress, urged a program looking toward the reconstruction of Jewish life and expressed the belief that "No special problems or burdens will be laid upon the Jewish population of any American country when the current fanaticisms shall have passed from the horizon." Dr. Wise said: "Our own United States is the denial of the validity of anti-Semitism."

Mr. David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, denounced the Palestine administration

for its having urged a policy of appeasement and for having discouraged Jewish war effort. A plea was made by Mr. Louis Lipsky that the British government should recognize the Jews as factors in helping to win an Allied victory.

That the Jewish people themselves can help in overcoming anti-Semitism is declared by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt in a current issue of the *Ladies Home Journal*. Mrs. Roosevelt asserts that much can be done to combat anti-Semitism if the Jewish people themselves will try to be "as natural and unself-conscious as possible. They can go about their own lives, doing the things they have always done, but trying not to be too aggressive or too flattering to the people who, they suspect, are sizing them up" . . . At the 8th annual Night of Stars held in this city last month, Mrs. Roosevelt paid tribute to the work being done by the Jews in Palestine. She said that what has been accomplished in Palestine is a lesson to everyone. She asserted that Palestine had done more than any other country in the world to help refugees.

NOT TOO ARYAN TO WEAR JEWISH CLOTHING

The Nazi authorities in Galicia have confiscated warm clothes, shoes, underwear and quilts belonging to Jews in order to send them to the German soldiers on the Russian front. They have also removed all clothing and bedding from Jewish homes in Tarnow and other Galician cities.

In greeting the London Jewish *Chronicle* on the occasion of its 100th anniversary Prime Minister Churchill made the first reference to Jews in any public statement of his since he assumed his present office. Mr. Churchill said in part: "None has suffered more cruelly than the Jew the unspeakable evils wrought on the bodies and spirits of men by Hitler and his vile regime. The Jew bore the brunt of the Nazi's first onslaught on the citadels of freedom and human dignity. He has borne and continues to

bear a burden which might have seemed beyond endurance. He has not allowed it to break the spirit; he has never lost the will to resist. Assuredly, on the day of victory, the Jew's suffering and his part in the struggle will not be forgotten. Once again, at the appointed time, he will see vindicated those principles of righteousness which it was the glory of his fathers to proclaim to the world."

The Zionist Organization of America is dedicating its current year's membership campaign to the memory of the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis. The Organization has proclaimed a Brandeis Memorial Membership Campaign for the 60-day period ending February 1, 1942. The campaign proclamation calls the attention of the Jews of America to the fact that Justice Brandeis was a staunch Zionist and quotes the following words previously uttered by him: ". . . Organize, organize, organize — until every Jew in America stands up and is counted—counted with us—or proves himself, wittingly or unwittingly, of the few who are against their own people."

The Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization, are jointly sponsoring an American Zionist Youth Commission for the purpose of promoting an intensive program of Zionist youth education in the country. All Zionist groups have been called upon to initiate practical steps necessary to insure the success of the youth program.

The 18th annual convention of Junior Hadassah, which was recently held in Boston, was the largest in the history of that organization. The delegates at the convention considered a number of vital problems facing the Zionist movement in Palestine. The group pledged itself to a program of work necessary to forward the aims of Zionism and democracy.

The Jews of Palestine have been giving valuable assistance to the British government in scientific fields as well as in the economic sphere. The

Hebrew University has placed its entire medical and scientific facilities at the disposal of the government and has arranged for courses for the medical officers of the British and Australian troops. In conjunction with Hadassah, hospital courses are being given in war surgery and camp sanitation for military physicians. The

PRACTICAL INTER-FAITH ACCOMMODATION

The First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Ill., one of the largest congregations in that city, needed temporary quarters during the remodeling of the church edifice. At the invitation of the Rabbi of the local temple the church used the temple for its Sunday services during the duration of the remodeling work.

University laboratories have made available to the British troops serum for many diseases.

Laurence Steinhardt, American Ambassador to Russia, told reporters in Jerusalem, while on his way to this country, that he was greatly impressed by the developments he had seen in Palestine. He said that the size of the old Jewish city of Tel Aviv gave him an unusual picture of constructive ability . . . The British military authorities have been using Palestine as a center for the men and material required in the Libyan campaign. The garrisons in Palestine have been filled to overflowing with reinforcements sent there to be quartered and trained. Jewish enlistment in the British forces has increased considerably.

A Council of Fraternal, Benevolent and Landsmannschaften Organizations has been formed to assist the refugee aid and adjustment work of the National Refugee Service. The Council is comprised of representatives of 30 national groups. The National Refugee Service is engaged in long-range planning and permanent establishment of the refugee as part of the American community.

A report of the chief of the chaplains of the War Department shows that for the year ending June 30, 1941 civilian Rabbis provided by the Jewish Welfare Board conducted 1,360 religious services for Jewish men in the army in addition to the services conducted by the regular Jewish army

chaplains. The total increase in religious services for the year was 403%. The army now has 22 regular Jewish chaplains in active duty.

Under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Brotherhood Week will be observed in this country from February 15 to 22. In announcing the theme of Brotherhood Week, "Now Is the Time for Men of Good Will — Build Understanding, Defeat Intolerance," Dr. Everett R. Clinehy, President of the Conference, urged Protestants, Catholics and Jews to "unite now to resist the degraded philosophy of hate."

National Jewish Book Week was observed for the 15th annual occasion throughout the country. The week was celebrated with exhibitions and discussions in synagogues, Hebrew schools and community houses, stressing the role of American Jews in keeping alive Jewish cultural traditions at a time when Jewish communities of Europe face destruction. Dr. Mordecai Soltes, Chairman of Jewish Book Week and Education Director of the National Jewish Welfare Board, said in connection with the celebration: "World Jewry has been deprived of reservoirs of Jewish cultural influence. This situation imposes upon American Jews a correspondingly greater responsibility for the maintenance and advancement of Jewish spiritual life."

The Graduate School at Yeshiva College in this city has been named the Revel Graduate School for Jewish and Semitic Studies in honor of Dr. Bernard Revel, founder and former President of the College, who died last year. The Yeshiva College is the only liberal arts college in this country under Jewish auspices.

The British Board of Jewish Deputies has decided to establish a committee to study post-war Jewish problems in Europe with special reference to the question of equal rights and citizenship for the Jews. With the approval of Chief Rabbi Joseph H. Hertz, the Board also resolved to deliver to the British government for war purposes all iron doors, gates and railings of all synagogues and prayer houses in Great Britain.

Although the Jews comprise only 9% of the Polish population 15% of

the soldiers enrolled in the Polish army now being formed in Russia are Jews . . . The Polish cabinet in exile has rescinded a decree of the pre-war Polish government which had de-naturalized thousands of Polish Jewish citizens abroad.

In order "to eliminate all Jewish influence from the national economy" the authorities in Paris are selling all buildings owned by Jews. Prospective purchasers must prove that they are "Aryan" and all bids require the approval of the German occupying authorities. The proceeds of sale will be credited to the Jewish owners after the deduction of legal and other costs and dues of 10%, half of which will go to a fund for the aid of destitute Jews . . . All Jews must belong to a General Union of Israelites which will have charge of their dealings with the government and to which they must contribute according to their means. All other Jewish organizations will be dissolved with the exception of religious groups.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS CREATE FIRST JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ICELAND

The Arrival of British and American troops in Iceland has resulted in the creation of a Jewish community, this is the first in the history of that island. The civilian community is composed of two refugee families. The Jewish soldiers have opened the first synagogue there.

The Slovakian Minister of the Interior has announced that the deportation of Slovakian Jews to provincial towns is only a temporary measure prior to their being confined in isolation camps . . . The Yellow Star of David which all Jews are required to wear is being used as a pretext for further incitements against the Jews in Slavonia and Croatia.

Three Jews were hanged by the Nazis in a Polish city the day after they had been forced to walk about the city with a large sign on their backs having the following notice in German: "I shall be hanged tomorrow at 11 o'clock" The punishment was inflicted because one of the victims had stolen a piece of bread and the other two had illegally possessed honey. The execution of these Jews was witnessed by all the Jews of a concentration camp near the city.

BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

Bill of Rights to be Commemorated At Service This Friday Night

The 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights will be commemorated at our services this Friday evening, December 19th. Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the subject, "Chanukah — The Triumph of the First Bill of Rights." By a happy coincidence, the celebration comes at a time when the Jews are celebrating the festival of Chanukah and the spiritual significance of these two events will be interpreted in the message by our Rabbi.

Rev. Kantor will lead in the congregational singing. You and your friends are invited.

Annual College Students' Service Next Friday Night

Our annual college students' service dedicated to our boys and girls at college who will be home for their winter vacation, will be held next Friday evening, December 26th. The guest preacher that evening will be Rabbi Morris Dembowitz, one of the younger men in the Rabbinate, a graduate of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He will speak on the subject "Youth — Promise and Fulfillment."

Oneg Shabbat This Sabbath

The Sisterhood of the Center in conjunction with the Eastern Parkway group Hadassah will hold an Oneg Shabbat this Saturday, December 20th at 3 o'clock. The celebration is arranged in honor of the birthday anniversary of Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah, and Matilda Schechter, founder of the Women's League, United Synagogue of America. An interesting program has been arranged for the afternoon. Rev. Samuel Kantor will bless the Chanukah candles at the conclusion of the Sabbath. The co-chairmen are Mrs. Maurice Bernhardt, representing Hadassah, and Mrs. William I. Siegel, representing the Sisterhood. All welcome.

New Hymnal Used at Our Late Friday Night Services

The worshippers at our late Friday night services were pleased to have the new supplement that has been

added to our regular song book used at the services. This supplement contains about a dozen new hymns and songs and four additional English services. The congregation joined in the singing of some of the new songs and they are eager to learn the remaining ones.

Employees' New Year Gift Fund

In view of the fact that the employees of the Center are prevented by rules of the institution from accepting gratuities throughout the year, the Center has established an annual New Year gift fund. Members who wish to contribute to this fund are requested to please send their checks to the Center with the least possible delay.

Young Folks League Dinner-Dance

The Young Folks League members of the Center are invited to join with the Senior League of Union Temple and Garfield Temple in a Chanukah festival and dinner-dance to be held at Union Temple on Sunday evening, December 21st at 7 o'clock. Subscription is \$1.50 per person. Tickets may be obtained at the Center desk or from any of the members of the Y.F.L. executive committee.

Congratulations

We extend our hearty congratulations and best wishes to the following:

Mr. and Mrs. Barnett Tanenbaum of 1094 Park Place upon the marriage of their son David to Miss Bernice Levey at the Center on December 14.

Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Salwen of 135 Eastern Parkway who celebrated the marriage of their daughter Natalie to Mrs. Lester Maslow on Dec. 14th.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Perla of 446 Kingston Avenue on the marriage of their daughter Shirley to Dr. David H. Appleman of 890 Linden Blvd.

Center Restaurant Open

The restaurant of the Center is open to members and their guests every Sunday from 12:30 o'clock to 5 p.m. Regular dinners are served at \$1.10 per person, children half price. Meals may also be had a la carte.

Chanukah Entertainment

The students of the Hebrew School and Sunday School will present a joint Chanukah program on Sunday, December 21. The students will gather in their classrooms at 10 a.m. and proceed from there to the auditorium. The program will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Levinthal will greet the parents. Rabbi Lewittes will serve as chairman. The program includes two plays prepared by the students of Mr. Hirsh and Mrs. Beder, and Chanukah songs and dances prepared by the Sunday School classes under the direction of Miss Irene Kantor with the aid of the Sunday School faculty. The singing will be led by Rev. Kantor.

Tickets for Maccabean Festival on Sale at Center

The Maccabean festival and dance sponsored by the Brooklyn Zionists will be held at the Manhattan Center on Sunday evening, December 21st. Tickets of admission may be purchased at the Information Desk of the Center.

Bar Mitzvah

Hearty congratulations and best wishes are extended to Dr. and Mrs. Oscar G. Levi of 576 Eastern Parkway on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Gerard which will be held at the Center on Saturday morning, December 20.

Acknowledgment of Gifts

We acknowledge with thanks receipt of gifts from the following:

Prayer Books

David Halpern

Mitchell Rothman and family.

Dr. Max Dannenberg in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of his son Marvin on November 29th.

Taleisim

Jacob Rutstein

Library

Rabbi I. H. Levinthal

Harry Blinkstein

Ina Klein

Jacob Shapiro

Mrs. Bertha Zirn

Personals

Mr. Jacob Shapiro is the author of the recently published book "Interesting Realty Decisions." This is a reference book on recent important real property decisions.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL CENTER MEETING

IN accordance with the requirements of Section 5, Article X of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Center will be held on Thursday evening, Jan. 22, 1942, at 8:15 o'clock.

Election and installation of officers, members of the Board of Trustees and the Governing Board will take place.

A detailed report of the past year's activities will be rendered.

MAX HERZFELD, *Sec'y.*

Junior Congregation

The girls' division of the Junior Congregation has elected two representatives: Phyllis Sterman and Judith Teller.

The following will lead the service on Saturday, December 20, 1941: Schacharit — Donald Gribetz; Summary of Sedrah — Goldie Wechsler; Maftir — Harold Kadish; Musaf — L. Lowenfeld; Sermon — H. Kummel.

Sabbath Services

Kindling of candles at 4:15 o'clock.

Friday evening services at 4:15.

Sabbath services, Parsha Mikez, will commence at 8:45 A.M.

Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the weekly portion of the law.

Class in Yaakov by Mr. Benjamin Hirsh at 3:15 p.m.

Mincha services at 4:15.

Daily Services

Morning services at 7 and 8

Sunday morning additional service at 9:00.

Mincha services at 4:15.

Condolence

We extend our heartfelt expressions of sympathy and condolence to the following:

Mr. Paul Barnett of 115 East 21st Street who lost his mother Mrs. Dora Barnett.

Mrs. Louis Smerling of 135 Eastern Parkway on the passing of her brother Louis Neustadt on December 13th.

MONDAY EVENING FORUM LECTURES

Held Every Monday at the Brooklyn Jewish Center Throughout the Season at 8:30 P.M. Admission to members, free; to non-members, 30c, including tax.

December 22nd

JOHANNES STEEL

Radio commentator, authority on foreign affairs, author of "The Second World War," and other books.



"FACING THE CURRENT
SITUATION REALISTICALLY"

December 29th

MAURICE SAMUEL

Brilliant author and lecturer



January 5th

DR. WILL DURANT

will speak on

"WORLD REVOLUTION"

an analysis of the basic changes that are taking place in the world — moral, economic and political.

January 12th

DR. ROBERT GORDIS

Noted preacher and scholar

"THE JEW FACES A NEW WORLD"

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

Aimis, Herbert

Laundry Married
Res. 3847 Neptune Ave.
Bus. 760 - 64th St.

Proposed by Harry Radutzky

Bruck, Reuben

Coffee & Tea Married
Res. 135 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. 79 Water St.

Proposed by Maurice Bernhardt

Dan, Dr. Julius M.

Physician Married
Res. 1445 Union St.

Proposed by Joseph M. Schwartz

Mr. and Mrs. Lieb Lurie and
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Blacher

Dolgin, Israel M.

Real Estate Unmarried
Res. 977 Flushing Ave.
Bus. 878 Flushing Ave.
Proposed by Aaron Gottlieb

Entlich, Theodore

Temp. Control Unmarried
Res. 1581 President St.
Bus. 28 E. 29th St.

Finkel, Irving

Poultry Unmarried
Res. 1584 Carroll St.
Bus. 94 Moore St.

Proposed by Barney Berkowitz

Forman, Howard L.

Unmarried
Res. 1629 Carroll St.
Proposed by Joseph Goldberg

Gerofsky, H.

Merchant Married
Res. 374 Crown St.
Bus. 19 Bond St.

Proposed by Jacob Rutstein

Goldstein, Dr. Hyman

Dentist Unmarried
Res. 474 Pennsylvania Ave.
Proposed by Colman Gray

Hirschfeld, Henry

Billiards Unmarried
Res. 772 Hopkinson Ave.
Bus. 675 Rockaway Ave.

Proposed by Dr. Herman Hirschfeld

Horwitz, Miss Lauretta

Res. 473 Empire Blvd.

Jacobs, Samuel W.

Unmarried
Res. 1134 E. 22nd St.

Proposed by Nathan Rothstein

Jaffe, Miss Briny

Res. 1486 Carroll St.
Proposed by Abe Barzo

Jaffe, Miss Sheila M.

Res. 312 E. 98th St.
*Proposed by Mr. and Mrs.
Arnold Gottlieb*

Kenin, Louis

Real Estate Married
Res. 456 Schenectady Ave.
Bus. 16 Court St.

Proposed by Aaron Gottlieb

Glekel, Newton

Attorney Unmarried
Res. 139 Grafton St.
Bus. 50 E. 42nd St.

Proposed by Benjamin Forman

Manoil, Miss Anna

Res. 446 Kingston Ave.

Marx, A. B.

Enamelware Married
Res. 486 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. Terre Haute, Ind.

Proposed by Dr. Jacob Ruchman

Rosenman, Joel

Teacher Married
Res. 925 Prospect Place
Bus. Thomas Jefferson H. S.
Proposed by Harry A. Harrison

Ross, Eddie

Theatrical Unmarried
Res. Lincoln Hotel
Bus. 1564 Broadway
Proposed by Joseph Goldstein

Schechter, Miss Ruth

Res. 831 Saratoga Ave.

Schneidman, Louis

Tobacco & Candy Married
Res. 3726 Laurel Ave.
Bus. 5317 New Utrecht Ave.
Proposed by Harry Radutzky

Siegfried, Jacob

Govt. Unmarried
Res. 715 Howard Ave.
Bus. 973 Flatbush Ave.

Wasser, Mrs. Bessy

Real Estate
Res. 576 Eastern Pkwy.
Proposed by Abraham Ginsberg

The following have applied for re-instatement

Greenberg, Martin

Millinery Unmarried
Res. 961 Eastern Pkwy.
Bus. 42 W. 39th St.

*Proposed by Samuel I. Samuels
and Aaron Pollack.*

Greenstein, Barnett

Rayons Married
Res. 81 Ocean Pkwy.
Bus. 499 7th Ave.

*Proposed by Irving Klein and
David Nemerov*

Shorenstein William S.

Attorney Unmarried
Res. 406 Stone Ave.
Bus. 66 Court St.

*Proposed by Murray T. Feiden
MAURICE BERNHARDT
Chairman Membership Committee*

OUR ONLY STORE
Hyman Spitz Inc.
FLORIST & FRUITERER

1685 PITKIN AVE.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

WEDDING DECORATIONS Our Specialty

We Carry A Complete
Line of

Fruit Baskets

for every occasion

THE BROOKLYN JEWISH
CENTER'S OFFICIAL
FLORIST

TELEPHONE DICKENS 2-4000

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KOL NIDRE

OUR heartfelt thanks are hereby extended to the following who have responded to the appeal made on behalf of the Center at the last Kol Nidre services:

Harry Preston Herman Yanowitz
In memory of the late David Shapiro by his children Nathan Salwen
S. S. Abelov
& Jacob Jentelson
Hyman Fein Hyman Abrams
(By the Fein and Portnoy family, in memory of wife and mother Helen Fein) Alex Bernstein
Mrs. Renny Sabel Block
Mr. & Mrs. I. Fine S. Bruman
Mr. & Mrs. S. I. Danziger
B. J. Kline Charles Dilbert
David Levkoff Geo. F. Dubrow
Hyman Aaron Mary Duberstein
In memory of the late Jacob A. Fortunoff
L. W. Bernard Barnett Gabriel
Phillip Brenner Abraham Ginsburg
Morris Brukenfeld Pincus Glickman
Morris Dlugasch M. E. Goldberg
S. M. Elowsky Mr. & Mrs. M. Goldberg
Moses Ginsberg Dr. Max Goldstein
Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel L. Goldstein
Jos. Goldstein and children H. Goody
Sidney & Phyllis Judge Emanuel
David Goodstein Greenberg
Samuel Greenblatt H. H. Gross
Leib Lurie Jos. Horowitz
Louis Halperin I. Hoffman
Morris Miller Louis Hornick
Mr. & Mrs. S. Kamenetzky
Samuel Moskowitz Benjamin Kaplan
Anonymous Louis Kohn
Morris Smerling Mrs. S. Leibowitz
Sol Sussman Dr. Benj. Koven
Louis Brenner Alex Levine
Benj. A. Levine Julius Levenson
Joseph I. Aaron Isaac Levingson
H. A. Freedman Hon. Mitchell May
Irving S. Forman Mr. & Mrs. A. R. Melker
Dr. & Mrs. S. Meltzer
S. D. Greenfield Morris Metzger
Max Herzfeld Morris Neinken
J. I. Holtzmann Isidor Polivnick
Abraham Kaplan Louis Posner
In memory of the late Samuel Koff Mrs. Max M. Rutchik
Simon H. Kugel Hyman Rachmil
Samuel Lemberg I. Jerome Riker
Harry Leventhal Louis Robbins
Julius Leventhal Mr. & Mrs. Morris Rothkopf
Norman Leventhal Louis Safier
Louis Parnes Mrs. Kate Salit
Archie Polsky E. R. Saretsky
Irving Rosenfeld N. D. Shapiro
Jacob Rosenfeld Harry Schetzen
Hyman Rothkopf L. H. Schlesinger
M. J. Rothman S. A. Schneider
Jos. M. Schwartz I. Silberberg
Abraham Shapiro B. Sklar
Morty Silverstein Simon Spiegel
Ralph Sokoloff Dr. & Mrs. Benj. Stoltzky
Dr. Moses Spatt Benj. Stoltzky
B. Tanenbaum Louis Weinstock

M. D. Wender

Albert Witty
Louis Wolff
Samuel Zirn
Tobias Zwerdling

Chas. Goody
Aaron Gottlieb
Samuel Schulman
A. N. Rosen

William Ball
Joseph Glaubman
Abraham Glasser
Harry Greene
Sol Horowitz
Mrs. Aaron Kuflik
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Korn

Lazar Levinthal
P. L. Lipshutz
Lester Lyons
Kalman I. Ostow
Isidore Rosenbluth
S. S. Seeger
Heyman Schrier
Joseph Stark
Mr. & Mrs. S. Stark
Dr. & Mrs. S. A. Wolfe
Martin Zinn

Chas. Bellin
Sarah L. Block
J. F. Bluestone
Samuel Brimberg
A. Milton Brown
Mrs. Benj. Brown
N. D. Brown
Theodore Brown
Reuben Bruck
Jacob S. Doner
Charles Fine
Dr. Reuben Finkelstein
Henry Froelich
Gladys and Muriel Goldberg
Samuel Golden
I. J. Gottlieb
Samuel Gottlieb
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob S. Greenspan
Mr. & Mrs. David Halpern
Samuel Horwitz
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Joseph
Mr. & Mrs. Leo Kaufmann
F. B. Kirschman

Mrs. L. Klein
Morton Klinghoffer
M. A. Krebs
Dr. M. R. Lemler
M. B. Levine
I. Lowenfeld
Jeremiah Levy
Zachariah Marcus
I. Perlstein
Charles Perman
Dr. & Mrs. Henry Plotkin

Mrs. Rebecca Posner
Morris Rosen
Herman D. Raabin
Louis Rosen
Anonymous
Mrs. H. Sarnoff
Frank Schaeffer

Chas. J. Schless
Isaac Schrier
Mrs. Jos. Schrier
Hyman Silver
Louis Simon
Dr. B. Stolloff
Ida Stulman
David Tannenbaum
Dr. H. I. Teperson
Abraham Weinstein
A. A. Weinstein
I. Wiener
Ch. Wunderlich
H. Zirinsky

Rose Amer
E. M. Edelstein
H. J. Forin
S. J. Fishman
Mrs. Jacob Goell
A. L. Goldman
Milton Goell
M. Hauser
Irving Horwitz
Murry Husid
K. Karl Klein
Samuel Koch
Anonymous
Max Friedlander
Miss Ida Kronbach
Ben Markowe
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Latenberg
Dora Leaks
Harry Munzer
Lena Pincus
Mrs. Anna Reager
Stephen Rey
Annie Reichman
Rae Stricks
Louis J. Roth
Eva Shure
Anonymous
Benjamin Waxman

A NEW BOOK OF JEWISH LEGENDS

"The Treasure Chest—Tales and Legends from Jewish Lore," is the name of a new book by Arthur Weyne. It is a serious attempt to present the ethical teachings of our forebears as they appear in some of the tales and legends of Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic literature in general. The Judea Publishing Corporation deserves praise for the attractive appearance of the book. "The Treasure Chest" is useful reading for young and old, for parent and teacher.

—E. N. R.

Gym and Bath Schedule

On Thursday, December 25th, the Gym and Baths will be open for men from 10 to 2 p.m. and to boys from 2 to 4 p.m.

Thanks – and A Request

WE have just successfully completed an intensive drive to enroll new members of the Brooklyn Jewish Center.

The Membership Committee is sincerely grateful to all those who showed their loyalty to the institution by enrolling their friends. Without their cooperation it would have been impossible to make such a substantial addition to our membership.

While the campaign is officially closed, we are still anxious to increase our Center family. We are sure that all members will do their utmost during the coming year to urge their friends to join an institution which has become notable throughout the United States.

Perpetuate the Memory of
YOUR DEAR DEPARTED ONES

by erecting a

MEMORIAL TABLET

in the

Synagogue of the Center

SUCCESSFUL METROPOLITAN OPERA FESTIVAL CONDUCTED BY CENTER

THE annual Center concert at the Metropolitan Opera House was held last Sunday evening, December 14th in the presence of one of the largest audiences that ever filled that famous temple of music. The entire program arranged for the evening was a brilliant one and enthusiastically appreciated by the huge audience.

We are greatly indebted to all who have contributed to the financial success of the event by either selling or buying tickets.

Aaron Gottlieb
Hon. Emanuel Greenberg
Moses Ginsberg
Samuel Lemberg
Isidor Fine
Charles Dilbert
Aaron Lewis
Samuel Greenblatt
Hyman Aaron
Maurice Bernhardt
Meyer A. Rosen and
Louis Weinstock
Morty Silverstein
Morris Dlugasch
Samuel Moskowitz
Mr. and Mrs. Morton Klinghoffer
Joseph M. Schwartz
Louis Halperin
David Halpern
Chas. Fine
Julius Leventhal
Isidor Silberberg
Ben Kaplan
Morris Brukenfeld
David Goodstein
Chas. Perman
Dr. Moses Spatt
Samuel Stark
Ira T. Kraner
Mrs. I. Lowenfeld
Morris D. Wender
Harry Zucker
Dr. Reuben Finkelstein
Ben Gunther
Sol Sussman
Isaac Levingson
Frank Schaeffer
Alex Bernstein

The committee, this year, was again headed by Mr. Samuel Lemberg as chairman. The other officers of the committee were: Isidor Fine, Moses Ginsberg, Judge Emanuel Greenberg and Mrs. Isador Lowenfeld, Co-chairmen: Hyman Aaron, Aaron Gottlieb, Samuel Greenblatt, Joseph M. Schwartz, Morty Silverstein, Sol Sussman, Vice-Chairmen and Maurice Bernhardt, Treasurer.

Jacob A. Fortunoff
Nathaniel L. Goldstein
Jacob L. Holtzmann
Harry Preston
Albert Joley
Frank Levey
David Levkoff
K. I. Ostow
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Witty
Louis Kotinsky
Samuel Rottenberg
Mrs. I. Wiener
Sam Katz
S. H. Goldberg
S. A. Doctorow
Saul S. Abelov
Milton J. Goell
Meyer Chizner
Jacob S. Doner
Ben Martz
S. M. Elowsky
Ben Markowe
Jacob Korn
Barney Olch
Samuel Bernstein
Albert A. Weinstein
Harry Zeitz
Mrs. M. Levy
Morris Weinberg
Wm. I. Siegel
Phil Brenner
Fred Kronish
A. H. Zirn
Louis Simon
Leib Lurie
Herman B. Schell
S. A. Schneider

BASKETBALL GAME

Sunday Evening
December 21st

Brooklyn Jewish Center

vs.

92nd St. Y.M.H.A.

Admission, including tax:

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SIMON SAMUEL FRUG

Continued from page 13

realized that with his frail constitution he was unfitted to work as a farmer. Therefore, at the age of fifteen, he decided to settle in Cherson, the principal city of his district. In the colony where he was born, he had studied the Jewish subjects, and had acquired a knowledge of Russian in the governmental school established through an ukase of Czar Nicholas I.

At Cherson, a minor Russian official accidentally met the youth, recognized his talents and made it possible for him to publish some of his poems in an Odessa magazine. They attracted wide attention, and as a result he was invited to St. Petersburg in 1880, and remained there for the rest of his life. From 1888 till his death in 1916, he produced a considerable number of Yiddish poems. His work is noted for its splendid craftsmanship but is somewhat lacking in lyrical warmth and inspiration.

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HEINRICH GRAETZ

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cian, he stopped at Munich to visit his son Leo, then private docent at the University. During the night of September 7, 1891, he suffered an attack of indigestion. The physician administered a dose of opium to relieve the pain. He fell into a deep sleep, as a result of the drug. In the morning when his wife entered his bedroom she found him dead.

The name of Graetz is ordinarily associated with his great and important, "History of the Jews." It must be remembered, however, that the History covers the entire period of Jewish existence, from the most primitive beginnings till his own time. It is natural, therefore, that he should become interested in the study of the books of the Bible, the most important source of the early history of Israel. Consequently, we find translations and emendations of the book of Ecclesiastes, Canticles and later of the Psalms from his pen. Immediately before his death, he had planned to publish the entire Hebrew Scriptures, with copious notes and emendations. A prospectus of this vast undertaking was actually published by him personally. Death, however, snatched him away before he succeeded in bringing this task to fruition. Part of the book of Isaiah, with his notes, was issued posthumously in 1892 by his disciple, the distinguished scholar, Professor William Bacher. Contrary to his general tendencies, Graetz in his exegesis, is quite radical, measured by the standard of other Jewish exegetes. For some of the theses addressed by him

he was severely criticized by his conservative colleagues. It brought about a complete rupture in his relations with his old protector and friend, Dr. S. R. Hirsch. His textual emendations manifest a brilliant mind, sterling common sense and scholarly insight, but they also display a subjectivity common to all his productions.

In other fields of Jewish learning, Graetz was also prolific. His articles on a variety of subjects may be found in many Jewish periodicals. From 1869 to 1887, he was the editor of the *Neonatschrift*, a magazine devoted to Jewish studies founded by his friend, Z. Frankel. Graetz was also interested in the field of Rabbis, and was instrumental in the production of the one volume Krotoschin edition of the "Palestinian Talmud." This was produced in 1866.

Vast as are the works of Graetz, his fame rests and will rest upon his most important creation, "The History of the Jews." Strange to relate, the fourth volume of the eleven German volumes appeared first. This treats of the history of the Jews following the destruction of the temple, and appeared in 1858. The other parts followed gradually until, in 1870, the entire work was completed. In later years, as some of his contemporaries disappeared from the scene, additions were made. Later, he also published a more popular history of the Jews.

Translations of Graetz' History are found in English, French, Hebrew and Yiddish. The first complete English translation was published in London, 1891-92, and republished by the Jewish Publication Society of America in Philadelphia in 1898. The English translation has certain advantages over the original German in that it contains a complete index prepared by Henrietta Szold and a complete biography of the author by his pupil and friend, Dr. Philipp Bloch. The French translation was begun by Moses Hess, the pioneer of Zionism, was interrupted by the Franco-German War and was resumed in 1888 by another hand. The Hebrew edition was completed in 1898. It consists of eight volumes, covering ten of the eleven original German books. The translator, the late Saul P. Rabinowitz, refused to translate the last volume on the ground that the author was biased in the treatment of that period. The Hebrew edition also has

very valuable comments by the late learned Professor Elias Harkavy, of Leningrad.

Graetz was a pioneer in the work of producing a satisfactory Jewish history, although he was not the first in this attempt. As early as the end of the 17th century, Jacob Basnage, a French Protestant clergyman, and a refugee residing in Amsterdam, completed a "History of the Jews." Basnage's history is prejudiced. He painted Jewish life as having deteriorated after having reached its climax with Jesus. Another complete Jewish history is that of Rabbi Isaac Marcus Jost, who completed it in the middle of the last century. His work was done at a time when sources were limited. Furthermore, his style is not attractive. His work may also be criticized on the ground that he assumes a certain apologetic attitude in behalf of the Jews.

Graetz' greatest achievement was that he told the story of the Jews from the point of view of a warm-hearted adherent of Judaism. Israel's struggle through the ages was a spiritual struggle, and Graetz pictured the life of Israel with love, with a warmth of feeling, and with an almost lyrical compassion. Added to this is his excellent style. It is no wonder that in spite of numerous defects his "History of the Jews" is still the most readable, the most universally accepted work of this nature.

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THE DREIDEL

Continued from page 8

thing, who worked day and night, froze, never had enough to eat, and never slept enough for my sake. Why should she not have a little pleasure too? Every person puts his own meaning into the word "pleasure." To my mother there was no greater pleasure in the world than hearing me recite the blessings on Sabbaths and Festivals. At the Passover I performed the *Seder* for her, and at *Chanukah* I recited the blessing over the lights. Was the blessing over wine or beer? Had we for the Passover *latkes* or fresh *matzo*? What were the *Chanukah* lights—a silver eight-branched lamp with olive oil, or, candles stuck in pieces of potato? Believe me, the pleasure has nothing to do with the wine or *latkes*, or a silver lamp. The main thing is the blessing itself. To see my mother's face when I was praying, how it shone and glowed with pleasure was enough. No words are necessary, no detailed description, to prove that this was unalloyed happiness to her, real pleasure. I bent over the potatoes, and recited the blessing in a sing-song voice. She repeated the blessing after me, word for word, in the same sing-song. She looked into my eyes, and moved her lips. I knew she was thinking at the time: "It is he—he in every detail. May the child have longer years!" And I felt I deserved to be cut to pieces like the potatoes. Surely, I had deceived my mother, and for such a base cause. I had betrayed her from head to foot.

The candles in the potatoes — my *Chanukah* lights—flickered and flickered until they went out. And my mother said to me:

"Wash your hands. We are having potatoes and goose-fat for supper. In honor of *Chanukah*, I bought a little measure of goose-fat—fresh, beautiful fat."

I washed myself with leisure, and we sat down to supper.

"It is a custom amongst some people to have *latkes* for supper on the last night of *Chanukah*," said my mother, sighing. And there arose to my mind Benny's *latkes*, and Benny's spinning-top that had cost me all I possessed in the world. I had a sharp pain at my heart. More than all, I regretted the little prayer-book. But, of what use were regrets? It was all over and done with.

Even in my sleep I had uneasy thoughts. I heard my mother's groans.

I heard her bed creaking, and I imagined that it was my mother groaning. Out of doors, the wind was blowing, rattling the windows, tearing at the roof, whistling down the chimney, sighing loudly. A cricket had come to our house a long time before. It was now chirping from the wall, "Tchiree! Tchiree!" And my mother did not cease sighing and groaning. And each sigh and each groan echoed in my heart. I only just managed to control myself. I was on the point of jumping out of bed, falling at my mother's feet, kissing her hands, and confessing to her all my sins. I did not do this. I covered myself with all the bedclothes, so that I might not hear my mother sighing and groaning and her bed creaking. My eyes closed. The wind howled, and the cricket chirped. "Tchiree! Tchiree! Tchiree! Tchiree!" And there spun around before my eyes a man like a top—a man I seemed to know. I could have sworn it was the *melamed* in his pointed cap. He was spinning on one foot, round, and round, and round. His cap sparkled, his eyes glistened, and his earlocks flew about. No, it was not the *melamed*. It was a spinning-top—a curious, living top with a pointed cap and earlocks. By degrees the *melamed* top, or the top-*melamed* ceased spinning round. And in its place stood Pharaoh, the king of Egypt whose story we had learnt a week ago. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, stood before me. He had only just come out of the river. He had my little prayer-book in his hand. I could not make out how that wicked king, who had bathed in Jewish blood, came to have my prayer-book. And I saw seven cows, lean and starved, mere skin and bones, with big horns and long ears. They came to me one after the other. They opened their mouths and tried to swallow me. Suddenly, there appeared my friend Benny. He took hold of their long ears, and twisted them round. Some one was crying softly, sobbing, wailing, howling, and chirping. A man stood near me. He was not a human being. He said to me softly:

"Tell me, son, on which day do you recite the mourner's prayer for me?"

I understood that this was my father of whom my mother had told me so many good things. I wanted to tell him the day on which I must say the mourner's prayer for him, but I had

forgotten it. I fretted myself. I rubbed my forehead, and tried to remind myself of the day, but I could not. Did you ever hear the like? I forgot the day of the anniversary of my father's death. Listen, Jewish children, can you not tell me when the day is? Why are you silent? Help! Help! Help!

* * *

"God be with you! Why are you shouting? Why do you shriek? What is the matter with you? May the Lord preserve you!"

You will understand it was my mother who was speaking to me. She held my head. I could feel her trembling and shaking. The lowered lamp gave me no light, but an oppressive stench. I saw my mother's shadow dancing on the wall. The points of the kerchief she wore on her head were like two horns. Her eyes gleamed horribly in the darkness.

"When do I say the mourner's prayer, mother? Tell me, when do I say the mourner's prayer?"

"God be with you! The anniversary of your father's death was not long ago. You have had a bad dream. Spit out three times. Tfu! Tfu! Tfu! May it be for a good sign! Amen! Amen! Amen!"

* * *

Children, I grew up, and Benny grew up. He became a young man with a yellowish beard and a round belly. He wears a gold chain across it. It seems he is a rich man.

We met in the train. I recognized him by his fishy, bulging eyes and his scattered teeth. We had not met for a long time. We kissed one another and talked of the good old times, the dear good days of our childhood, and the foolish things we did then.

"Do you remember, Benny, that *Chanukah* when you won everything with the spinning-top? The G always fell for you."

I looked at Benny. He was convulsed with laughter. He held his sides. He was rolling over. He was actually choking with laughter.

"God be with you, Benny! Why this sudden burst of laughter, Benny?"

"Oh!" he cried, "oh! go away with your spinning-top! That was a good top. It was a real top. It was a pudding made of suet. It was a stew of nothing but raisins."

"What sort of a top was it, Benny? Tell me quickly."

"It was a top that had all around it, on all the corners, only the one letter—G."

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